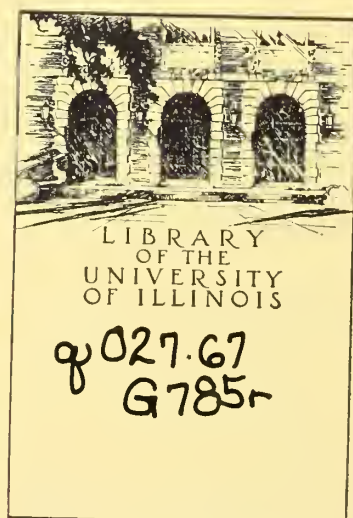
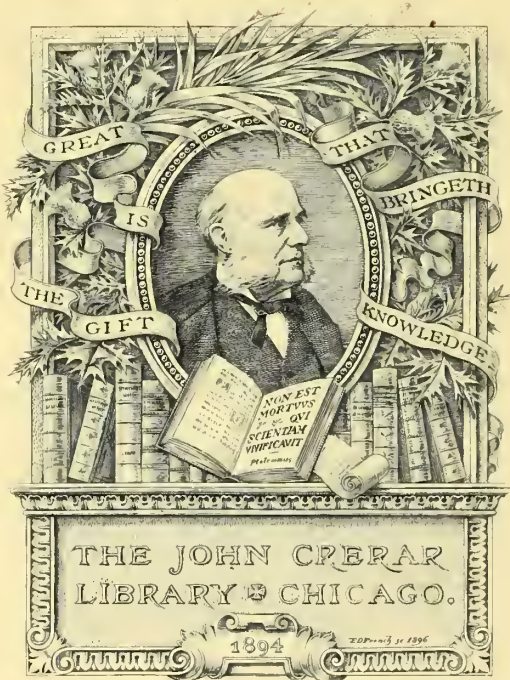


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PRISON LIBRARIES COMMITTEE

REPORT

OF THE

DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE

ON THE

SUPPLY OF BOOKS TO THE PRISONERS IN H.M. PRISONS AND TO THE INMATES OF H.M. BORSTAL INSTITUTIONS.

Presented to Parliament by Command of His Majesty.



LONDON:

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CONTENTS.

WARRANT OF APPOINTMENT	Page
INTRODUCTION	3
THE PRESENT SYSTEM	4
" LIBRARY " BOOKS :	
General character of the demand	6
Recommendations for meeting the demand	8
Bound Magazines	8
Political Reviews	10
Newspapers	10
BOOKS OF SECULAR INSTRUCTION :	
What is low understood by the phrase	11
Recommendation as to definition	11
Discretion of Chaplains	12
Question of drawing prisoners' attention to these books	12
Alteration of the name	12
Technical Manuals	13
" Magazines	13
Number allowed to each prisoner	13
BOOKS OF MORAL INSTRUCTION	14
BOOKS OF DEVOTION AND SCHOOL BOOKS	14
TIME FOR READING	14
METHOD OF SELECTING BOOKS	15
OFFICIAL CATALOGUE	16
PROGRESSIVE STAGE SYSTEM	17
HOSPITAL PATIENTS	17
ILLITERATE PRISONERS	17
SUFFICIENCY OF THE PRISON LIBRARIES :	
The Capitation Grant	18
The Standing Orders	19
Cheap editions of standard books	19
Rebinding	19
Certain books not to form a charge on the grant	20
Condemnation of worn-out books	20
Method of purchase	20
Purchase from officers' libraries	20
DISTRIBUTION OF BOOKS :	
Convict Prisons	21
Local Prisons	21
Recommendations as to distribution	22
THE CHAPLAIN'S GUIDANCE	23
SEPARATION OF LIBRARIES	23
QUESTION OF DEPRIVATION OF BOOKS	24
SENDING BOOKS IN FOR PRISONERS' USE	24
OBLITERATION OF BLANK PAGES	25
SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS	25
APPENDIX I.—MEMORANDUM BY THE REV. C. B. SIMPSON, CHAPLAIN INSPECTOR OF PRISONS	29
APPENDIX II.—STRENGTH OF PRISON LIBRARIES	32
APPENDIX III.—FAVOURITE PRISON AUTHORS	33

PRISON LIBRARIES COMMITTEE.

WARRANT APPOINTING THE COMMITTEE.

Home Office,
Whitehall, S.W.

I hereby appoint—

Mr. M. L. WALLER, one of H.M. Commissioners of Prisons,
PROFESSOR RALEIGH,
THE HONOURABLE A. L. STANLEY,
THE REVEREND C. B. SIMPSON (Chaplain-Inspector, H.M. Prisons),
Mr. BASIL THOMSON (Secretary, H.M. Prison Commission),
Miss OLIVE BIRRELL, 11, Sutton Court, Chiswick (Lady Visitor,
H.M. Prison, Holloway),

to be a Committee to consider what are the principles which should govern the supply of books to the prisoners in H.M. Prisons and to the inmates of H.M. Borstal Institutions, regard being had to the reformative purposes of prison treatment and to the maintenance of the progressive stage system.

And to report what, if any, amendment of the existing rules and practice on the subject is desirable.

I appoint Mr. M. L. Waller, one of H.M. Commissioners of Prisons, to be Chairman of the Committee, and Mr. A. J. Wall, of the Prison Commission, to be Secretary.

(Signed) WINSTON S. CHURCHILL.

Whitehall,

29th April 1910.

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TO THE RIGHT HON. WINSTON S. CHURCHILL, M.P., SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT.

INTRODUCTION.

SIR,

1. By your Warrant of the 29th April last we were appointed to consider what are the principles which should govern the supply of books to the prisoners in H.M. Prisons and to the inmates of H.M. Borstal Institutions, regard being had to the reformatory purposes of prison treatment and to the maintenance of the progressive stage system.

2. In virtue of this warrant we have held seven sittings and have examined 20 witnesses. Four of these sittings were held at Holloway, Wormwood Scrubs, Borstal, and Dartmoor respectively; at each of which establishments, besides taking formal evidence, we interviewed prisoners and inmates in their cells and examined the books they were reading. Besides questions of principle, which were expressly remitted to us by your Warrant, we have felt it desirable to extend our inquiry into, and to make recommendations upon, a number of matters of detail; since the regular supply of suitable literature depends to a considerable extent upon good organization of the libraries and proper methods of distributing the books. We have now the honour to report as follows:—

THE PRESENT SYSTEM.

3. The library at every prison is placed in the charge of the Chaplain, and prison libraries in general are under the supervision of the Chaplain Inspector of Prisons. The Chaplain at each prison makes out, once a year, a list of the books he desires to obtain for the library, with the concurrence of the Governor and the Visiting Committee. This list is then forwarded to the Chaplain Inspector. The Chaplain Inspector examines and revises all the lists, and submits them for the approval of the Commissioners, before the books are supplied to the prisons. The Chaplain at each prison also superintends the arrangements for distributing books to prisoners, which are carried out under his guidance by the schoolmasters or the librarian warders. He interests himself generally in the prisoners' reading, and gives them advice.

4. The principle on which books are supplied in convict prisons, which contain only persons sentenced to penal servitude, differs in one important respect from that obtaining in local prisons, which contain persons sentenced to ordinary imprisonment. In convict prisons the same numbers and kinds of books are allowed to a prisoner from the day of entry to the day of discharge. In local prisons, on the other hand, the supply of library books plays a part in what is known as the "Progressive Stage System," that is to say, such books are allowed on a graduated scale according to the period passed in the prison with continuous industry and good conduct.

5. The books supplied to prisoners are divided for administrative purposes into five classes, named, respectively, devotional books, school books, books of moral instruction, books of secular instruction, and library books. The books included in these five classes are, briefly, the following:—

(i) *Devotional Books*.—These are the Bible, Prayer Book (in the case of Roman Catholics the "Garden of the Soul"), and Hymn Book. They form a part of the furniture of every prisoner's cell, as the official phrase runs, and remain in it throughout his sentence.

(ii) *School Books*.—These are:—

English History Reading Books (the National Society's).

Language Lessons.

Arithmetic.

Collins' Clear Type Pronouncing Dictionary.

(iii) *Books of Moral Instruction*.—These differ according to the religious persuasion of the prisoner. To Anglicans are supplied either—

The Narrow Way, or

The Traveller's Guide.

To Roman Catholics --
 Think Well on't,
 The Roman Catholic Penny Catechism, or
 The Poor Man's Catechism;
 and to Nonconformists--
 Pilgrim's Progress, and
 The Methodist Hymn Books.

There is also a considerable choice of suitable books of this character for Jewish prisoners.

To all prisoners alike --

The Healthy Home and how to keep it.

For Juvenile-Adults the book called "A Pack of Lies" may be substituted for the "Healthy Home" at the discretion of the Chaplain.

Books of this character are kept in every prisoner's cell throughout the sentence. Like devotional books, they form a part of the cell furniture. Alternative books are occasionally provided, in a manner to which reference will be made hereafter, but the majority of prisoners receive under this heading one or more of the books above mentioned.

(iv) *Books of Secular Instruction.*—This is an important category. The somewhat obscure phrase by which it is denoted has proved to be a difficulty to Chaplains in their endeavours to carry out the regulations, and we recommend, as will be seen hereafter, a change of the name, a definition of the class signified, and an extension of that class. At present there is no definition, and widely different interpretations have, naturally enough, been put upon the phrase by different chaplains, as will be seen by a glance at the memorandum of the Chaplain Inspector, which is printed as an appendix to our report.

Generally speaking, a "book of secular instruction" has been taken to mean an educational or technical book in the narrower sense of the term, such as an arithmetic, a French grammar, or a manual of carpentry or blacksmithing. Books of this kind are allowed to all prisoners, both in local and convict prisons, at all times during their sentence, except when under punishment; and the regulations place no limit on the number which may be allowed, or the frequency with which they may be changed. Since a "library book," technically so called, is not allowed to persons serving sentences of imprisonment while they are in the first stage, a period which lasts, ordinarily speaking, for the first 28 days of the term, the character of the book of secular instruction to be given during that period acquires especial importance.

(v) *Library Books.*—"Library books" has become in prisons a technical phrase used to denote all the contents of the prison library other than those comprised in the four classes already mentioned. In the distribution of these there is, as has been said, a difference between convict and local prisons. In convict prisons each convict is allowed two library books a week throughout his sentence. In local prisons this is not so. The library book here forms a part of what is known as the "Progressive Stage System." That is to say, the prospect of obtaining it is used as one of the regular incentives to good conduct and industry. It is not allowed at all for the first four weeks of the sentence. When the prisoner reaches the second stage, which, if he earns full marks, he can do in 28 days, he earns the privilege of having one library book a week. When he has passed through the second stage, which he can do in a minimum period of 28 days more, he earns the further privilege of having two library books each week during the third stage, and thenceforward to the end of his sentence. It must be borne in mind that 81 per cent. of prisoners receive sentences of one month and under, and consequently do not become entitled to a library book at all. Certain special classes of prisoners, however, such as the second division and the Juvenile-Adults, are exempted from these restrictions, and are allowed two library books in each week from the commencement of their sentences.

6. The weekly distribution is made by the Schoolmasters (or the Librarian Warders in the convict prisons) under the general supervision of the Chaplain and the Roman Catholic Priest.

7. The number of library books is roughly calculated, in a convict prison, on the basis of three books per head of the daily average population. In a local prison it is governed by a scale laid down in Standing Orders, which limits the number of volumes in local prison libraries according to the daily average number of prisoners who have passed through the first stage.

8. There is, however, a further limit to the supply of books of the third, fourth, and fifth classes in the shape of the restriction of the expenditure. This may not at any prison, convict or local, exceed the amount that would be produced by a grant of 1s. 3d. per head on the daily average population of the prison during the preceding year; save that the Commissioners may, on good cause being shown, make an additional grant to a particular prison over and above this amount, so long as the total spent on all the prisons together does not exceed 1s. 3d. per head of their population. This 1s. 3d. capitation grant has to purchase not only the library books properly so called, but also the books of moral and secular instruction. The devotional books and school books alone do not form a charge on the grant.

9. Chaplains are recommended, when making their demands, not to exceed an average price of 2s. 6d. per volume. The books in use are rebound as long as this can be done with advantage, but they are subject to heavy wear and tear, and about 20 per cent. of each prison library has to be condemned and replaced every year. The books included in the Chaplain's list of demands are partly fresh copies of standard books to replace copies worn out, and partly new books. His selection of these latter is aided by catalogues of the leading publishers, some of which are sent to him annually for that purpose, and is supervised by the Chaplain Inspector.

10. We shall employ the terms above mentioned throughout our report, to denote the five classes of books we have described. They are in general use throughout the prison service, and experience shows that to adhere to them is the best way to avoid confusion. When, therefore, we use the expression "library books" we are referring solely to the books in class 5. When an inclusive term is needed to cover all the books in the prison we shall speak of "the library."

11. We may remark at once that the classification appears to us to be a convenient one, and that we see no reason to recommend that it should be changed.

12. We shall now proceed to deal with the five classes in the reverse order to that in which they have been described above.

LIBRARY BOOKS.

General Character of the Demand.

13. The facilities for reading in prisons are, generally speaking, good, and are taken advantage of by the majority of prisoners. There are some qualifications to be made to this general statement, and these are dealt with in subsequent paragraphs. But the qualifications are of a minor character; and when allowance has been made for them, it remains true to say that prisoners' opportunities for reading, and the quality of the literature they read, on the whole surpassed our expectations.

14. The population of the prisons is almost as varied in character as that of the outer world, and prisoners' requirements in the matter of literature show a correspondingly wide range of divergence. The days when the bulk of prisoners were quite ignorant and illiterate are past. Though the average level of education of the prison population is below the general average of the nation, yet actual illiterates are now few, and nearly every grade and kind of education to be found in the outside world has its representatives to-day in prison. The ordinary demand which has to be met by the library of a large prison is about as varied as that which is catered for by the circulating library of a provincial town, and at one or two prisons would compare favourably with it in point of quality.

15. Prisoners' main desire is naturally for relaxation and entertainment. After a fairly hard day's work this is not surprising, either in prison or out of it. What is somewhat surprising is the extent to which the works of the best English novelists are either spontaneously asked for by prisoners, or accepted and read with pleasure when recommended by the Chaplain. There is always a considerable number of prisoners who read Scott, Dickens, and other standard writers, and even prefer them to other books. A distinction has to be drawn here between the inmates of convict and local prisons. What we may call the "educated demand" is chiefly to be found among convicts. Among local prisoners it is the exception to find persons of any substantial degree of education. In the smaller local prisons they are almost unknown. In the convict prisons, on the other hand, such persons are by no means uncommon. At Dartmoor, for example, besides Dumas, Rider Haggard, and Mrs. Henry Wood, we found Dickens, Thackeray, Scott, and Shakespeare in regular demand; while Pope, Southey, and Chaucer have also their adherents.

16. A still larger class of prisoners, who find Scott, Dickens, and Thackeray tedious, take pleasure in such authors as Charles Reade (whose "Never Too Late to Mend" is a great favourite in prisons), Marion Crawford, Seton Merriman, Besant and Rice, Clark Russell, Mrs. Henry Wood (whose clientèle among prisoners is perhaps larger than that of any other author), Charlotte Yonge, Miss Braddon, Marie Corelli, Wilkie Collins, Rider Haggard, Conan Doyle, and other popular authors, all of whom are well represented in prison libraries. Among the women at Holloway, Mrs. Henry Wood is an especial favourite. At Borstal we found that her pre-eminence was just maintained against the competition of Dickens, Clark Russell, Henty, Fenimore Cooper, Charles Reade, Conan Doyle, and Marryat.

17. Merging into this class of prisoners, but below them, come those who will read novels by authors of repute under persuasion, but prefer a plentiful admixture of another kind of literature which figures very largely in prison libraries, namely, bound volumes of magazines. At present these bound volumes form one-third of most prison libraries; and, on account of their size, they are counted as equal to two library books. They are eagerly demanded by a considerable proportion of prisoners, partly on account of the quantity of matter they contain, partly because of the illustrations; but often, we fear, because of the desultory habit of mind, the result of low intelligence and poor education, which finds it irksome to keep to one subject at a time, and prefers to take its entertainment in the shape of multifarious scraps.

18. The bulk of the prisoners whose sentences are long enough to enable them to earn library books belong to these classes. The majority of the most ignorant persons who find their way to prison are included in the 81 per cent. who have sentences of one month and under, and consequently do not become entitled to a library book at all.

19. As we come lower in the scale of intelligence among the prison population, the appetite for the bound magazine increases. When we reach those whose education is so imperfect that reading presents a difficulty, the pictorial parts cause the bound magazine to be increasingly valued, until in the descending scale we touch bottom with the unfortunate illiterates, still occasionally to be found in our prisons, for whom special provision is made in the shape of illustrations cut out of condemned volumes and pasted into large scrap books.

20. But besides all these, there is always a certain number of highly educated prisoners for whom even the best of works of fiction are not sufficient. Such men are mostly to be found among convicts, the average quality of whose reading is considerably superior to that of the local prisoner; and especially among the convicts placed in what is known as the "star" class, *i.e.*, persons of respectable antecedents. For these even Scott, Dickens, and Thackeray require to be supplemented by historical or philosophic authors of the first rank. Among the convicts at Maidstone there are men who will seldom read novels, but ask for such authors as Froude and Freeman, Macaulay, Burke and Gibbon, Ruskin, Carlyle, Spence, and Mill. They are usually professional men convicted of serious frauds, who have occupied good positions before their downfall.

21. A spurious form of this highly educated demand arises from time to time, in the shape of a curious fashion in books which occasionally springs up and runs through a prison. It arises largely from the egotism characteristic of many criminals, which often takes the form of making a show of great cultivation. Such a fashion may for a time quite alter the usual requirements. Mr. Thomson, one of our members, who was for five years Governor of Dartmoor Prison, remembers a time when it became the fashion among the convicts to ask for Shakespeare. Most of them did not read him, but the idea gained currency that to ask for Shakespeare was a proof of superior education, and many were the grumbles because the supply of Shakespeares was, of course, quite insufficient to go round. Shortly afterwards at the same prison Dickens became the rage, and for months the supply of Dickens was insufficient. Such fashions as these are of course abnormal. The inmates of a large prison are usually very catholic in their tastes; the "educated" demand being present, as we have said, chiefly in the convict prisons. In the majority of local prisons, including all the smaller ones, the appearance of a prisoner of any substantial degree of education is a rare event.

Recommendations for meeting the Demand.

22. We agree with the present policy of the Prison Commissioners, which is to meet these widely varied needs in a liberal spirit. It is true that in the selection of all books whatever, for use in prisons, the reformatory object of modern prison discipline must be kept in view. Books are an instrument of the first importance in the attainment of that object. Their influence is even stronger in the life of a prison than elsewhere, because of its limitations. The absence of all the innumerable distractions of ordinary existence allow the incidents of the world of fiction to impress themselves with peculiar force upon the imagination; until the life lived in the novel comes to have a more vivid reality to the prisoner than the actual daily round of labour. Moreover, many prisoners never read at any other time than during their terms of imprisonment. Such favourable conditions should be used to the best advantage by those who direct prisoners' reading.

23. At the same time, we think it would be a mistake to attempt to effect improvement by the clumsy expedient of books which point an obvious moral. Example is better than precept, in literature as in life, and descriptions by good novelists of the incidents of a society in which certain standards of manners and conduct are habitually observed, are likely not only to provide relaxation and entertainment, but insensibly to elevate the mind to a degree which could never be attained by the nursery methods of Sandford and Merton. We approve, therefore, of the present practice of admitting to prison libraries a liberal choice of novels, both standard and new.

24. But it follows from what we have said above that we consider that a censorship ought always to be exercised. Novels of an unhealthy moral tone, novels of a morbidly introspective kind, novels of the "trashy" order, should be excluded. Among novels other than those of the greatest writers, stories of a healthy, bracing, outdoor nature are to be preferred, especially for young prisoners. For example, Marryat, Fenimore Cooper, Walter Besant, Rider Haggard, are all authors whose stories can do nothing but good, while for Juvenile-Adults such writers as Henty, Mayne Reid, Jules Verne and Ballantyne can profitably be added.

25. Library books other than books of fiction require a word of discrimination. They are but little needed at the majority of local prisons; while at the convict prisons and some of the largest local prisons there is, as we have indicated, a constant and genuine desire for them. Good histories, biographies, books of travel, philosophical and political writings are for the most part expensive, though many are now to be found in cheap editions. We think, therefore, that, while a good stock of such books should be kept at the convict prisons and at the local prisons in the largest centres, the like necessity does not exist elsewhere.

26. At the majority of local prisons, books of this kind can without disadvantage be much fewer in proportion to the daily average population. When an educated prisoner happens to be confined in a small prison where the library is not adequate for his needs, books could, we believe, be borrowed for him without difficulty from the library of some larger prison. We think, however, that no prison of a moderate size should be without a few standard histories, while at the smallest prisons there should at least be a copy or two of such books as Green's Short History, with some English histories of a more elementary kind for prisoners unable to take advantage of the standard writers.

27. The contents of prison libraries at the present time show that the authorities already entertain views similar to those we have indicated above, and endeavour, with a fair measure of success, to act upon them. We shall show in subsequent paragraphs how we think that they could be still more thoroughly carried out by certain improvements in the present methods of selection.

Bound Magazines.

28. One particular class of book which figures largely among "library books" requires special mention--the bound magazines. By the Standing Orders it is required that "about one third" of the library books should be bound volumes of periodicals, and there is an official list of the periodicals which may be demanded. This list comprises one or two publications of as high a class as "Chambers's Journal" and the "Cornhill," but consists for the most part of the ordinary popular illustrated magazine of the railway bookstall. Bound volumes of a magazine are considered, on account

of their size, to be the equivalent of two library books. Notwithstanding this fact, they are eagerly demanded by the less well-educated prisoners, and considerable discontent is sometimes aroused if the desired volume is not at the time forthcoming. One of our witnesses, a Roman Catholic Priest, even told us that, when perplexed by the desire of some of the Roman Catholic prisoners at a particular prison to become Protestants, he eventually found it was because the Protestant library (at that prison separate from the Roman Catholic) contained volumes of the "Strand Magazine," while the other did not.

29. We are not altogether in favour of this form of reading. The reasons for the popularity of magazines are partly the illustrations, partly the considerable mass of varied matter comprised in a single volume, which usually makes it in fact more than the equivalent of two library books. But to a large extent we fear the preference for the bound magazine arises from a desultory habit of mind which finds difficulty in keeping attention sustained on a single story of any length. Irrespective of the matter of the bound magazine, the manner in which it is often read is not likely to promote any sort of intellectual progress.

30. On the other hand, there are prisoners who read the articles and stories intelligently. We have also found women prisoners occasionally deriving advantage from the technical articles on knitting, crochet-work, and the like, which appear in some periodicals. The illustrations are a boon to those who read with difficulty, and occasionally, we hear, help a prisoner in the first stages of his education to struggle on to learn to read. And there are a few prisoners, especially among women, whose mental depression is so profound, and whose intelligence is of so poor an order, that the kindest, and indeed the only possible, course for the authorities is to attempt to divert their minds a little from their position by giving them the lightest of reading matter. For these cases the bound illustrated magazine is very suitable.

31. We do not, therefore, recommend their abolition. But we find ourselves in agreement with the majority of the witnesses in thinking that they form too large a proportion of the prison library books; and are, on the whole, read too much. We recommend that the number of such volumes should be diminished, and that the provision in the Standing Order fixing it at one-third of the whole number of library books should be dispensed with. We do not think that any fixed proportion should be laid down. The needs of different prisons differ to a considerable extent, and this, like other kindred matters, can with advantage be left to the discretion of Chaplains under the supervision of the Commissioners and the Chaplain Inspector.

32. We only desire to indicate two considerations which appear to us to arise from the evidence we have taken. The first is, that a somewhat more liberal provision of magazines may perhaps, with advantage, be made at convict than at local prisons. We hear that some of the convicts with the longest sentences develop in the course of time a distaste for novels, and find greater solace in the miscellaneous general information of the magazine. Secondly, we think it is desirable to allow a somewhat larger proportion of magazines to women than to men, for reasons we have already indicated. In selecting these, preference should be given to those containing useful articles of domestic information.

33. Nor do we make any definite recommendation as to the frequency with which a magazine volume should be issued to a particular prisoner. Some Chaplains make it a practice to issue such a volume not oftener than once in six weeks to the same individual, some not oftener than once in four. The matter is again one for the discretion of the Chaplain and librarians, who should use their judgment as to the needs of individual prisoners. But we consider that for prisoners of normal intelligence and moderate education a maximum allowance of one magazine volume in four weeks should be amply sufficient.

34. In choosing magazines for men, as for women, preference should be given to those which make a practice of publishing, in addition to their ordinary matter, useful articles of a technical or educational kind.

35. A further difficulty which arises in connection with the bound magazine is the frequent occurrence in some popular periodicals of articles and illustrations which are unsuited for issue to prisoners; some on account of their undesirable moral tone, and others because they present crime and criminal careers in an attractive light. There have even been articles which were actual guides to the commission of crime, containing minute descriptions of the apparatus necessary for coining or burglary.

Standing Orders properly provide that such matter shall be excised or obliterated before the volume is issued. This process entails heavy labour on the Chaplain and his assistants, who have to search many volumes of bound magazines annually for such matter; while it creates discontent among the prisoners, who frequently complain of the consequent mutilations. We think it desirable to diminish as far as possible both the labour and the grumbling. Of the magazines supplied to prisons there are only three or four which require frequent excisions, and we recommend that they should be discontinued altogether.

Political Reviews.

36. The periodicals dealt with in the preceding paragraphs are the popular magazines of stories and articles, mostly illustrated. But there is another type of periodical which is very sparsely represented in prison libraries, whose numbers might be increased with advantage. This is the weekly or monthly review of a superior class, containing articles on politics, current events, literature, and science; the periodical of the educated man. We have had evidence that at one convict prison a number of volumes of the "Nineteenth Century" are available, partly provided from public funds and partly by gift; and that these have been widely read and appreciated by convicts. We think that the influence of such publications cannot fail to be a healthy one.

37. We are aware, of course, that a question of principle arises here. It is possible to take two views of the method to be adopted in directing prisoners' reading. The one would be to separate him as much as possible from the current events of the outer world and to endeavour, by steady work and good general literature of a healthy kind, to cause him to forget the past as much as possible, and to turn his mind into an altogether new channel. The other view is that this ideal, whether right or not, is impracticable. A man's mind cannot be entirely divorced from the world outside the prison walls. The arrival of newcomers, the visits and letters of friends, the library books themselves, all constitute points of contact. If he is a man of any intelligence at all, the partial information of public events which he thus obtains can only make him desire more. The desire is legitimate, and to satisfy it, so far as prison conditions admit, is right in itself, while the widening of a man's mental outlook which follows when his attention is directed to public affairs cannot fail to improve his general tone of thought.

38. We adopt the second of these views. We think that no harm, but good, will result from admitting information as to the principal events of the outer world, and the opinions of educated writers upon them. Such information may even occasionally prove of practical utility on discharge. We have been told, indeed, that some convicts leaving prison after long sentences find themselves hampered in beginning their new lives by their ignorance of much that has passed during their incarceration.

39. We used the phrase above, "so far as prison conditions admit." We mean by this that such information cannot be up to date. Were weekly or monthly periodicals to be supplied in the shape of current numbers, every inmate of a prison would have an equally good claim to have the current number, and that claim would not fail to make itself heard. A large prison taking a weekly review in this manner would require hundreds of copies every week. On both financial and administrative grounds, such a course is impracticable.

40. We recommend, therefore, that the libraries of the convict and large local prisons should be furnished with a certain number of periodicals of this class, such as the "Nineteenth Century," the "Saturday Review," the "Spectator," &c. To these might be added "T. P. O'Connor's Weekly," which has the advantages of being sound, interesting, and very cheap. They should never be kept or issued in the shape of single numbers, but should be bound in volumes containing three months' issues apiece. To prevent them losing their interest too soon, preference should be given to the periodicals of less ephemeral character. A volume of this nature should not usually, however, be kept in circulation more than three years. It should be clearly understood that no prisoner can put forward any claim to be supplied with the latest volume; he can only obtain it in his turn, like any other library book.

Newspapers.

41. It will readily be gathered from what has been said above that we cannot recommend that any attempt should be made to supply daily newspapers in prisons. At Borstal the Special Grade are permitted to associate for an hour in the evenings

three times a week for recreation, and at this time they are supplied with current numbers of some of the daily and weekly illustrated papers. But Borstal partakes of the character of a Reformatory rather than of a prison, and this is one of the special indulgences granted to the Borstal boys who wear the "blue dress," which have no counterpart in ordinary prisons. For the mass of prisoners the daily newspaper is neither possible nor desirable.

BOOKS OF SECULAR INSTRUCTION.

What is now understood by the phrase.

42. It will not have been forgotten that every prisoner is entitled to have a "book of secular instruction" in his cell throughout his sentence, while it is the only book, besides the Bible, Prayer Book, and Hymn Book and the "books of moral instruction," that a local prisoner may have in his cell during the first month. The question what kinds of books should be comprised in this class is therefore one of importance. There is no official definition of the term; it has been left to be interpreted by the different Chaplains at their discretion; and a considerable variety of practice has been the result. Some Chaplains have limited the term to educational books strictly so called, such as arithmetics or French grammars; others have extended it so broadly as to include good historical and biographical works—indeed, practically everything in the library except fiction. In one case a Chaplain even stretched his discretion so far as to issue the "Simple Adventures of a Memsahib" as a "book of secular instruction," but it is due to him to say that he did so to alleviate a woman prisoner's mental depression. But the interpretation generally put on the term is to restrict it to simple educational books of elementary or technical instruction.

43. Books of secular instruction are kept apart in the prison library from library books technically so called; but in prisons where the term receives a wide interpretation, library books are frequently given as books of secular instruction.

44. The witnesses who gave us evidence on this point were practically unanimous in advocating a liberal interpretation of the term. Even those Chaplains who have made it their practice only to allow books of a severely instructional character in this category told us that they did so purely because they conceived themselves to be precluded by the regulations from acting otherwise, and that they would welcome a generous definition of the term "books of secular instruction."

45. There was, we found, an equal unanimity as to what that definition should be. All alike thought that, if the book of fiction was reserved to the category of "library books" technically so called, practically everything else might with advantage be brought under the heading of "secular instruction"; provided that discretion was reserved to the Chaplain to issue such books as were suited to the needs of individual prisoners.

Recommendation as to Definition.

46. We agree with these witnesses. We do not think it necessary to restrict the reading of local prisoners in their first stage as narrowly as is usually done at present. We consider that chaplains can safely and with advantage be given a wide scope to allow books of practically all kinds except works of fiction under this head; using their discretion, according to their knowledge of the requirements of individual prisoners, as to whether they give a book of elementary instruction, a trade manual, or an historical book. We even recommend that the exclusion of books of fiction should be subject to one qualification, namely, that in special cases the Chaplain, when satisfied that such a course is proper and desirable, should have discretion to allow an imaginative book of *standard* rank to a prisoner in the First Stage.

47. Such a course will be a benefit both to local prisoners during their first month, when they can have no other book, and to all prisoners throughout their sentences, when the books of secular instruction supplement the novels. A prisoner of some education may have no use for an arithmetic or a French grammar or a manual on plumbing, but he may derive both improvement and relaxation from Green's Short History of the English People. The present restriction has sometimes led to absurd results; we have heard of a man of very considerable education being given a fourth standard reading primer. That was a mere mistake for which the Chaplain was not responsible, but results not very dissimilar may follow even under the Chaplain's personal supervision, from the narrowness of the choice to which he often feels himself limited at the present time. Similarly at a later stage of the sentence the

arithmetic or language primer may lie idle in the educated man's cell, while a standard historical or biographical work would be welcomed by him as a supplement to his allowance of novels.

48. On the other hand, we approve the general purpose of the present arrangement in local prisons, which is two-fold ; firstly to concentrate prisoners' minds on serious and definitely improving subjects during the first portion of their sentences ; and secondly to supply an incentive to industry and good conduct by reserving the privilege of the novel until the marks representing the first stage have been earned. We regard these as proper objects, and the existing regulations as well adapted to secure them ; and we are therefore not in favour of abolishing the distinction between the books which are issued in the first stage and the general body of library books. But we think, as we have said, that the former class should be extended so as to include, at the discretion of the Chaplain, practically everything except fiction ; that is to say, histories (but not historical novels), biographies, philosophy ; and science, political, social, and physical. Fiction should be reserved, as now, as a privilege to be earned by good behaviour.

Discretion of Chaplains.

49. Chaplains should be clearly given to understand that they have, and are expected to exercise, a wide discretion in supplying books of this class. Among the mass of prisoners, whose education is poor and whose intelligence is not first rate, a book of elementary instruction or a trade manual will often be the best book to give in the first stage, especially in cases where the sentence is short and the question of employment on discharge has shortly to be faced. In the latter cases in particular much benefit may be done to a prisoner by limiting him to his trade manual during his short imprisonment, and so compelling him to concentrate his attention on a subject of immediate utility. But where the education is better, or the sentence is long, a book of history or biography may often be found more appropriate.

Question of drawing Prisoners' attention to these Books.

50. We find that there is no general practice of informing prisoners on reception of their right to a book of secular instruction in the first stage. It is true that there is an entry on the cell cards to that effect, but it reads as follows :—

A prisoner in the first stage . . . (here follow several other regulations) . . . will . . . be allowed books of religious and secular instruction.

It thus fails to catch the attention, and often passes unnoticed. Many prisoners whose sentences are short (and 81 per cent. have sentences of one month and under) leave prison without having discovered their right to such a book.

51. We have interrogated witnesses as to whether it would not be right that they should be informed of this right on reception, but opinions differ as to this. Some Chaplains and schoolmasters think that many prisoners of a debased type, with short sentences for drunkenness, &c., would only use their right, if they discovered it, in order to give trouble.

52. We think the entry on the local prison cell cards should be made plainer, so that it cannot escape the notice of any prisoner who has sufficient intelligence to read his card.

53. The convict prison cell cards at present contain no mention at all of this class of book, and we recommend that a paragraph should be added drawing attention in plain language to the existence of a supply of such books and the advantages of using them.

54. Beyond this we think the question of informing the prisoners orally may be left to the discretion of the Chaplain, who sees every prisoner on reception, and can and will direct to the matter the attention of every prisoner who is able to derive benefit from such a book. We think, however, that it will not usually be found desirable for the Chaplain to recommend prisoners with sentences of 14 days or less to apply for such books.

Alteration of the Name.

55. We recommend, further, the abolition of the term "books of secular instruction" because of its somewhat misleading nature, and the substitution of the term "books of education."

Technical Manuals.

56. Books of this class (*i.e.*, books of education) are a valuable feature of the prison system, from which many prisoners have derived great advantage. We have heard of a man who taught himself French, bookkeeping, and shorthand in prison by their means, and instances of substantial progress made by the use of the trade manuals are numerous. Prisoners should be encouraged to make even fuller use of them than at present, and to this end we recommend that the supply and variety of such books should be somewhat increased, especially at the larger prisons.

57. At most prisons there is now a stock of technical manuals in all the principal handicrafts, such as carpentry, plumbing, bricklaying, and the like, and these form some of the most useful books issued at the present time under the head of "secular instruction." In the same category, besides the arithmetics, grammars (there are 57 French grammars at Portland, and they are in constant use) and language primers, may be found some of the "science primers" series or other books of introduction to the physical sciences. Here and there are manuals of shorthand, bookkeeping, &c. All these have proved themselves to be of great utility. At the larger prisons we visited we found the trade manuals, in particular, in considerable demand, and were told by the Chaplains that a complete series of these manuals, and additional copies of those dealing with certain trades, could be usefully employed.

58. We recommend that every prison should have a series of the small trade manuals, which are usually published at the price of a shilling, and that additional copies of those dealing with the trades carried on at the prison should be supplied.

59. At the larger prisons, besides a reasonable number of copies of the elementary manuals dealing with the trades carried on at the prison, there should be a few technical treatises of a more advanced kind on the same trades, to which prisoners capable of deriving benefit from them might progress after having finished the elementary manuals. For prisoners accustomed to clerical work and unsuited to manual labour, we think that manuals of shorthand and bookkeeping should be made available if they desire them.

60. Among elementary books of education we find that a serviceable general textbook of geography, of the size usually sold at about 2s. 6d., is much to be desired; and also a good general English History of about the same size.

Technical Magazines.

61. At one or two prisons a few useful technical magazines are taken, such as the "Tailor and Cutter," the "Farmer and Stockbreeder," &c. These are usually bound in three-monthly volumes, and are then issued in rotation to those engaged in the industry. This practice has proved its utility, and might be extended with advantage. We recommend that at every prison where one or more of the principal industries is carried on upon a considerable scale, the trade periodical, provided that a good trade periodical exists and is devoted exclusively to matters of the trade, should be taken and issued in this way. Two or three copies will be sufficient if they are regularly circulated.

Number allowed to each Prisoner.

62. As regards the number of books of education now issued to individual prisoners, the usual allowance is one in each month in local prisons, and two in each month in convict prisons. This allowance is regulated by practice only. There is no rule to limit the number. The Chaplain can increase it if he thinks it desirable, and he occasionally does so. It appears to us, generally speaking, to be sufficient. In local prisons one book of this character is usually as much as a man can usefully assimilate in the evenings of one month. At convict prisons, with their longer time for reading (*see* paragraph 71), the usual allowance of two a month is sufficient in most cases. But a convict not only has more time for reading than a local prisoner owing to the absence of the evening task of work; but by reason of the greater length of his sentence he is apt to acquire the habit of regular and rapid reading to a greater extent. We do not recommend that the number of his library books should be increased. Two novels a week appear to us to be enough for any man, in or out of prison. But he might with advantage be allowed a larger number of books of education, if he desires them, after he has passed a certain length of his sentence with good conduct and industry.

63. We leave it to the authorities to decide whether it is necessary to make any special provision by regulation for such allowance of additional books of education.

We should be averse to any rigid rule as to frequency, and we are inclined to think that it would be sufficient to draw the attention of Chaplains to the fact that they have full discretion as to the allowance of such books, and that it is desirable that well educated convicts, in the later stages of their sentence, should be treated with liberality in this matter, provided always that they are able and willing to profit by the books supplied.

64. The undue accumulation of books in a cell should not, however, be permitted, as the absorption by one man of a number of books operates to the disadvantage of the rest, and there are disciplinary objections to such accumulation. We recommend that the total number of library books and books of education together which are permitted to lie in any one cell at any one time should not exceed four. The convict who desires and is allowed three books of education simultaneously will thus have to forego one of his novels.

BOOKS OF MORAL INSTRUCTION.

65. We recommend that the "Narrow Way" should not as at present be regarded as indispensable for Anglicans. It is not equally suited for every class of Church of England prisoner. A small collection of special books suitable for the same purpose should be kept by Chaplains, as is occasionally done at the present time, for issue to prisoners as an alternative to the "Narrow Way" in proper cases. For example, we think that "Pilgrim's Progress" might be freely issued to Anglicans as well as to Nonconformists. At present it is usually considered to be a book of moral instruction for Nonconformists only.

66. Again, the Chaplain's collection of special books might include, besides books whose basis is religious, a few selected works of an ethical or philosophical character, for issue at his discretion in particular cases where he thinks the authorised books of moral instruction may not be the most suitable. A man who approaches the unanswerable questions of life in a spirit of honest and serious inquiry devoid of cynicism (and such a spirit is occasionally found in prison as it is outside) may derive more benefit from a book which examines the foundations of human beliefs with sincerity than from the one which starts by assuming their truth; and a man to whom the religious sanctions of morality can make no appeal may be influenced by a treatise which provides a solid foundation for an ethical code in the necessities of human society.

67. At the largest prisons a few separate books of moral instruction specially suitable for Wesleyans and other Nonconformists are desirable.

68. Besides the "Narrow Way" or its alternative, it is the practice to place in every cell a copy of the "Healthy Home," a useful manual of general information on hygienic, sanitary and domestic matters. We do not think it necessary that this book should be in every cell throughout a sentence. For prisoners whose sentences are of one month and under, the present practice might continue; for the rest it will be sufficient, we think, if the "Healthy Home" is given in the last month of the sentence only.

BOOKS OF DEVOTION AND SCHOOL BOOKS.

69. Some witnesses have raised the question whether an Old Testament History might not with advantage be substituted for the Old Testament itself in the case of Juvenile-Adults. We are disposed ourselves to reply in the affirmative, but as the giving of the whole Bible is required by a statutory rule, we prefer to leave the matter for the consideration of the authorities and to make no positive recommendation. If our suggestion were to be adopted it would be right, we think, that if a Juvenile-Adult asked for a complete Bible he should still be allowed to have it.

70. We have also heard dissatisfaction expressed in certain quarters with the first readers at present used for teaching illiterate adults. It should not be difficult to find or construct a suitable book, and we are content to draw attention to the point.

TIME FOR READING.

71. The time a prisoner has for reading may be said, roughly, to average three hours on a week-day in a convict prison and two hours in a local prison. Both classes can read during their dinner hour in the middle of the day, but while the convict has the

time between coming in from labour at 5.30 p.m. until "lights out" at 8 practically free save for eating his supper, the local prisoner usually has a certain amount of work to do in his cell, which will occupy him, according to his skill and industry, until 6.30 or 7 o'clock.

72. Convicts and local prisoners alike have from five to six hours in which they can read on a Sunday, if they so desire.

73. Some prisoners read in the morning in summer by the early daylight before the regular occupations of the day begin.

74. Juvenile-Adults sentenced to detention in a Borstal institution have somewhat less time than prisoners for ordinary reading on week-days, about one to one and a half hours on the average. This is owing to the greater amount of time occupied in their training by education in school, drill, and gymnastics. On Sundays they have as much time as other prisoners. The lads in the "special grade," *i.e.*, those who by good conduct over a period of five months or more have earned the "blue dress," numbering between a third and a fourth of the whole, are permitted to associate in the halls for one hour on three evenings in each week, and they are supplied at these times with such illustrated papers as the "Graphic," the "Sphere," the "Illustrated London News," "Black and White," and the "Daily Graphic"; besides games such as chess, draughts, and dominoes.

75. The visitor who enters a prisoner's cell at dinner-time, at supper-time, or in the evening after supper, will usually find him engrossed in his book if he is not obliged to be at work, sitting by the window if it is daylight or at the table by the gas if it is after dark.

76. We have no recommendations to make as regards the time prisoners are allowed for reading. It appears to us that the time they now have is both sufficient in itself and as much as is consistent with the maintenance of a proper system of labour and discipline in the prison.

METHOD OF SELECTING BOOKS.

77. The method of selecting books does appear to us to admit of some improvement. At present the selection of books to replace those annually condemned as worn out is in the hands of the Chaplain at each prison, who is aided in his choice by the Roman Catholic Priest, and by the Assistant Chaplain where there is one. The Governor also lends such assistance as his other duties will permit. The Chaplain is annually furnished for his guidance, from headquarters, with the catalogues of several of the principal publishers.

78. Chaplains have done their best under this system, and the results have been, on the whole, good.

79. Comparatively few unsuitable books have been discovered or heard of by us in the course of our inquiry. Occasionally an oddly unsuitable choice has come to light; for example, both "Raffles" and "Robbery under Arms" have figured in Chaplains' demand lists, and the Chaplain in each case has supported his selection on the ground that the evildoer comes to a bad end; all too unmindful, as it seems to us, of the singular picturesqueness of his antecedent career of successful crime. Here and there a few novels of the "trashy" kind, or of an undesirable moral tone, have been found. But the great majority of the selections have been irreproachable, and it is evident that Chaplains as a whole have given to the task all the time and thought that could be spared from their other duties.

80. Our only reason for recommending a change is that the task of selecting a library is too much for any one man, or for any two or three men, whose days are already filled up with other work of an exacting kind. It is a physical impossibility for men with little time to spare to gain an acquaintance with the contents of a large number, perhaps several hundreds, of new volumes each year; sufficient to enable them to decide whether or no they are suitable for a prison library. It is chiefly for want of time to read all the books that the few occasional mistakes have been made. What is wanted is to enlist a number of brains into the service, and to combine the knowledge and experience of many Chaplains and others in a common fund. By this means we think the area of safe and wise choice could be considerably widened, and the danger of the admission by inadvertence of unsuitable books could be removed altogether.

OFFICIAL CATALOGUE.

81. Some years ago there was in existence an official catalogue of books permitted for prison libraries, prepared at headquarters, from which Chaplains of individual prisons were required to make their selections for their annual demands. This catalogue was last issued in 1894. The reason for discontinuing it was that when, after a few years, it was found to be out of date, it was thought that the individual choice of the local Chaplains, subject to revision at headquarters, would be as efficient as, and less burdensome than, a periodical revision of the catalogue.

82. We consider that the proper way to attain the object we have indicated above is to revert to the system of an official catalogue; and we recommend that this should be done. After a good deal of discussion and careful consultation of our witnesses, we think the best method of compiling such a catalogue will be the following. The catalogue of a good free library or some similar institution should be taken as a basis, say the catalogue of a well-managed public library of recent foundation in a popular centre. Copies of this should be circulated to the Chaplains of all prisons, who should be asked to send up lists of any books which they recommend should be added to it, comprising in all cases only books with the contents of which they are personally familiar. They should be asked at the same time to recommend the elimination from this catalogue of all books which, also from personal acquaintance, they consider to be unsuitable for prison use. To the list thus formed should be added books selected by the Chaplain Inspector, by the Commissioners themselves, and by any other competent persons whose advice and assistance they may desire to enlist.

83. Besides sending such lists of books to assist in the formation of the original catalogue, Chaplains should be asked to recommend at any time for subsequent inclusion in the catalogue, and should be permitted to demand, other books with the contents of which they are personally familiar. For convenience sake, Chaplains should, whenever possible, send up such supplementary demands and recommendations with their ordinary annual demands, distinguishing them on the list from the books already in the catalogue.

84. Care should be taken that the existence of the catalogue does not cause delay in obtaining books. A Chaplain who requires a book not in the catalogue at a time of year which is not the proper time for sending in the annual demand should be at liberty to send in a supplementary demand for it. If the book is approved it should at once be supplied to him, and at the same time noted for inclusion in the official catalogue at the next revision.

85. In carrying out these duties Chaplains should have the assistance, as now, of the Roman Catholic Priest, who should always have a voice in the selection of a portion of the books demanded, to an extent proportionate to the number of Roman Catholic prisoners at the prison.

86. Additions to the official catalogue could and should be made at any time, but it should be revised, reprinted, and reissued to all prisons once in three years. The price of the books should appear in it, but an explanatory note should be added to the effect that the column of prices is intended as a guide and not as a binding requirement, so that if a cheaper edition has been produced or the book has become obtainable as a "remainder" in the interval between two revisions of the catalogue, it should not be necessary to purchase the more expensive one.

87. A convenient form of catalogue is one which we have seen at a large free library in London. Here all the books are arranged in a single list, in alphabetical order of the first word in the description of the book (omitting the articles "The" and "A"), irrespective of whether that word is the name of the author or the first word of the title. But under the name of each *author* the whole of his works which are in the library are given in an inset column, this being in addition to the entry of each such work separately in its own alphabetical place. All works, too, which belong to a particular and definite subject, such as, *e.g.*, "Elocution," which are not novels, are similarly collected under the appropriate subject headings, as well as under their authors' names; but these latter (books belonging to a well-defined "subject") do *not* appear in the alphabetical position of their title, as this would involve a third entry, which is considered unnecessary.

88. This form of catalogue, which combines in a single list an alphabetical catalogue, a catalogue of authors, and a subject catalogue, is found the most generally convenient for ordinary public use.

89. In the prison catalogue, however, it will be desirable to adopt some method to distinguish the books of "secular instruction," or, as we propose that they should be called, the "books of education." This might conveniently be done by an asterisk, and thus a single list would suffice for all purposes.

90. This recommendation has the unanimous assent of all the witnesses we have examined on the point. The only criticism of the proposal we have heard has been the fear expressed in one or two quarters lest the existence of an official catalogue should unduly narrow the Chaplain's choice. We think that if Chaplains are encouraged, as we suggest, to make recommendations freely for inclusion in the catalogue, and, subject to the approval of the Chaplain Inspector, to obtain books which are not in the catalogue at the time of demanding, this danger will disappear.

PROGRESSIVE STAGE SYSTEM.

91. Our views under this head have been indicated already. In local prisons we consider that the system of withholding the novel until the prisoner, by his conduct and industry, has earned the marks representing the first stage (which he can do in a minimum period of 28 days) is a useful incentive to good behaviour.

92. Similarly, the prospect of obtaining, when the second stage has been passed (again after a 28 days' minimum), two library books in each week, instead of one, acts as a further stimulus to good conduct. We recommend the maintenance of the system.

93. In convict prisons, on the other hand, we are in agreement with our witnesses, who unanimously represented that the difference of conditions as between penal servitude and ordinary imprisonment called for difference in treatment, and advised that two library books a week should continue to be allowed, as at present, throughout the sentence. It must be remembered that the convict, or prisoner sentenced to penal servitude, has already passed a period in a local prison, during which he has been subject to the same conditions in the matter of books as the local prisoner, including the deprivation of novels for the first 28 days. He does not begin his sentence at the convict prison. Then, he has a longer term to serve; he has more time for reading; and lastly, he hardly needs an additional incentive to behave well, as he has already the powerful stimulus of a liberal remission of sentence to be earned by industry and good conduct, which amounts at the maximum to one-fourth of the whole sentence in the case of men, and one-third in the case of women.

94. Our only recommendation of this nature in connection with convict prisons is, that where a convict has passed a substantial period in the convict prison with good conduct, say a year, he might, if he desires it and can profit by it, be allowed more frequent books of education at the discretion of the Chaplain.

HOSPITAL PATIENTS.

95. There is a single exception which we recommend should be made to the restrictions mentioned in the preceding paragraphs. They should not apply to patients in the prison hospital. There is no reason, we think, why the Chaplain should not have full discretion to give a well-conducted patient such books as he thinks suitable, and to change them as often as appears to be reasonably required.

ILLITERATE PRISONERS.

96. We have considered the question whether something more could not be done to alleviate the lot of the illiterates. It is a distinct addition to the severity of their punishment that they should be unable to avail themselves of the books which prove so great a solace to the mass of prisoners; and the scrap books and illustrations cut from condemned volumes, which we have mentioned, do but little to supply their wants.

97. Their case is, however, one of much difficulty; and we confess that we have been unable to find an adequate solution. Reading aloud has been suggested, and it is possible that at certain prisons and on certain occasions arrangements might be made to that end. But administrative difficulties would prevent the general adoption of this plan; and we have been told, moreover, that the illiterates themselves probably would not care for it. Indeed, on at least one recorded occasion, a good many years ago, when reading aloud was tried, it met with conspicuous ill-success.

98. Continuous employment would, of course, be a solution of a kind. But to add to a prisoner's evening task of work because he or she cannot read would be scarcely just.

99. The hard case of the illiterate can never, we fear, be fully met; and the real solution of the difficulty lies in the spread of education. Illiterates are few in number now, and are steadily becoming fewer. But while we admit that we cannot propose a satisfactory plan, we recommend this matter to the further consideration of the authorities, who should, we think, take advantage of any and every supply of suitable matter that can be readily and economically obtained, such as pictorial magazines and catalogues; maps, and puzzles.

SUFFICIENCY OF THE PRISON LIBRARIES.

100. Figures bearing on this point will be found in Appendix No. 2, but the mere numbers do not fully inform, as the question of sufficiency depends so much on the character of the population of the different prisons.

The Capitation Grant.

101. Briefly we may state our opinion that the libraries of local prisons either are now sufficient in numbers, or can be made so without increasing the present financial grant; but that at the six convict prisons and the three Borstal Institutions we find a certain shortage which we recommend should be met, in their case only, by an increase of the capitation grant from 1s. 3d. to 1s. 6d.

102. The reason for the distinction is not the lack of numbers of books at these establishments—Dartmoor, for example, with a population of 1,106, has 3,516 library books. Nor is it the length of sentences—the Dartmoor library books being sufficient, at two books a week each, to last the Dartmoor population longer than the term of the longest sentence. It is the existence among the convict population of men who have read enormous numbers of books during previous sentences of penal servitude, and who arrive at the convict prison already familiar with the bulk of the books the library contains.

103. We are quite aware that we lay ourselves open to criticism in proposing an increased grant of money for the entertainment of persons who need it chiefly because of the number of their crimes. But the difficulty in practice is a real one; and since good literature is a reformative influence and we do not think that the hope of eventual reform should ever be abandoned, and since cases do occur of men who after repeated terms of penal servitude take to an honest life and maintain it; we think that that criticism should be faced, and that the slight increase we propose should be made in respect of the convict prisons.

104. In the case of the Borstal Institutions the reasons for our recommendation are—first, the educational importance of maintaining a good supply of the best books, a most valuable factor in the special course of training there carried on; and, secondly, the fact that books are worn out somewhat sooner in the Institutions than in prisons. The boys handle their books more roughly, and make them dirtier, on the average, than do the adults.

105. The 1s. 6d. grant, if conceded to these establishments, should, like the present 1s. 3d. grant, be a maximum limit. It need not always be fully spent. The existing practice of calculating the strength of the library of a convict prison at approximately three books per head of the population may, we think, be retained as a basis; but where, as at Dartmoor, the number so acquired proves to be insufficient in the case of a certain number of the convicts, the Chaplain should be permitted to ask for an increase sufficient to meet the want, within the limitation of the grant.

106. There is a further reason for recommending an increase of the capitation grant in the case of convict prisons and Borstal Institutions, namely, that it is especially in these establishments that the books of secular instruction, or, as we prefer to call them, the books of education, require some increase in number and variety. The elementary trade manuals, which have already proved their utility, are rapidly finished by some of the more intelligent of the convicts, and require to be followed up by more advanced treatises, especially in plumbing and masonry. These more advanced books are expensive, but only a few of them would be required. It is in these prisons, too, that additional copies of the elementary manuals of the principal trades are chiefly required. And we have recommended that at prisons where the principal industries are carried

on to a considerable extent—and convict prisons especially fulfil this condition—two or three copies of the corresponding trade magazines, where such exist, should be taken in. All these recommendations, if adopted, will somewhat increase the expenditure at the convict prisons and the Borstal Institutions.

The Standing Orders.

107. In any case, whether the capitation grant be increased or not, we recommend that the Convict Prison Standing Orders should be modified, so as to give Chaplains freedom to demand books up to the limit of the amount which the grant affords.

108. As regards the local prisons, we recommend the abolition of the Standing Order which limits the number of volumes according to the daily average number of prisoners other than those in the first stage. We have found difficulty arise occasionally from this limitation, especially in the small prisons, and we think Chaplains should have a free hand to demand books up to the limit imposed by the 1s. 3d. capitation grant. If this is accepted, and if our advice in the next paragraph is followed, we believe the local prison libraries can be amply stocked without any increase in the grant.

Cheap Editions of Standard Books.

109. Some Chaplains already take advantage of the admirable cheap editions of standard books now obtainable. The present Chaplain Inspector, one of our members, has for several years past taken every opportunity of bringing to their notice the fact that a host of the best books in the language, classics and modern books alike, can now be obtained for 1s., 1s. 6d., and even in some cases for less. But more advantage still can and should be taken by Chaplains of publications such as those of "Everyman's Library," the "Universal Library," the "World Library of Famous Books," and other similar series. Not only are these editions cheaper, but while their print and paper and binding are excellent, their small size actually makes them more durable than the larger volumes. More than one witness has told us that they stand hard prison usage better than books of the 3s. 6d. editions. By this means the average cost per volume could be reduced and the number of books in the library increased, while a margin would still be left for the purchase of a few expensive books, such as historical or biographical works and technical books of an advanced kind.

Rebinding.

110. We believe, too, that the lives of books could be somewhat prolonged by improving the present arrangements for rebinding. The usual plan now is to allow a book to continue in use for three or four years, until it is practically worn out (since prison usage is apt to be hard), before rebinding. For rebinding, books are sent in many cases to certain prisons where rebinding is regularly carried on; but at some prisons other than the rebinding prisons, this is not done, but the books are rebound at the prison itself. This rebinding on the spot is of course done by the prisoners, and though the workmanship is usually fair, the methods are somewhat elementary, and the life of the book is not greatly prolonged. By a little development of the system already partly in vogue it should be possible to choose a certain number of prisons conveniently situated as the regular book-binding centres, and to send to them for skilled rebinding the books from all the prisons in their respective parts of the country.

111. Such rebinding should take place, in the case of an average novel in regular use, after a shorter interval than at present, say not more than two years; and, if the book is to stand hard usage, the binding should be done by the method of canvas or leather joints. The sewing should be continuous and not what is known as "two on" and the edges should not be clipped except when absolutely necessary.

112. Some of the heavier magazines, however, are received from the publishers in such a flimsy binding that they fall to pieces almost at once with the strain of prison use. Such volumes might with advantage be rebound before they are issued at all. And we think that all the heavier magazines, whether rebound immediately after purchase or not, should be rebound in three-monthly parts instead of six-monthly parts; as the smaller volumes would be far more durable than the larger half-yearly ones now issued. Such three-monthly parts should count as equal to one library book, not two.

Certain Books not to form a Charge on the Grant.

113. At the present time the only books which do not form a charge on the capitation grant are the school books and the devotional books. The books of moral instruction, such as the "Narrow Way," the "Healthy Home," and the Wesleyan and Methodist Hymn Books, have to be paid for out of the grant; and the necessity for providing these volumes diminishes the amount available for the purchase of the remainder of the library. We feel justified in recommending that these books, as well as the devotional books, in short, all the books which are left in every prisoner's cell throughout his sentence, and form, as the phrase is, "a part of the cell furniture," should be separately provided and should not form a charge upon the grant.

Condemnation of worn-out Books.

114. The annual demands for new books are now sent to headquarters at the time of the condemnation of the worn-out volumes. As the revision of the lists and the obtaining of the new books necessarily takes time, there is always a substantial interval, amounting to some months, during which the prison library is under strength. We recommend that condemnations should be made in advance, and that the volumes condemned should not pass out of use until the new supply has been received.

Method of Purchase.

115. Several witnesses have criticised the present method of purchase. The actual purchase of books is not carried out by the Prison Commissioners, but by the Stationery Office, to which all the Chaplains' lists of books demanded are annually transmitted for that purpose. Considerable delay usually occurs before the books required reach their respective destinations, and some witnesses have suggested that the Stationery Office do not purchase on the best terms obtainable. These witnesses have urged that their demand lists, when approved, should be returned to them, and that they should be permitted to purchase the books for themselves; alleging that they could procure the books in this manner with equal or greater economy and more expedition.

116. We have carefully inquired at the Stationery Office into both questions. As regards the delay, we find that this is largely due to the fact that the whole of the demands from the different prisons have not been sent to the Stationery Office from the Prison Department sufficiently early. The Stationery Office transmit all the demands promptly to their contractors as they are received, but the necessity for the revision of a certain number of the lists in the Prison Commissioners' Office causes delay in the transmission of those lists to the Stationery Office and consequently to the contractors. The contractors, in their turn, are perhaps inclined to wait till all the demands are in before proceeding to make their purchases. There is room, we think, for rather more expedition both in the revision of lists in the Prison Department and in the making of purchases by the contractors. A fixed date should be appointed by which all the lists should be transmitted to the Stationery Office, those still under revision at that date simply having the few doubtful books struck out and their consideration deferred. The contractors, on their part, should be asked to see that all deliveries are made, in the absence of unforeseen hindrances, by a date to be fixed at a reasonable time thereafter.

117. If this course is followed, and if our last recommendation as to the condemnation of worn-out volumes in advance is adopted, we see no reason why the present annually recurring period during which the prison libraries are under strength should not disappear altogether.

118. As regards price, we are satisfied, after examining the figures that the Stationery Office have kindly placed at our disposal, that that Department is able to obtain books on more advantageous terms than any private purchaser, and we recommend the continuance of the present arrangement.

Purchase from Officers' Libraries.

119. The officers at every prison have a library of their own, which is kept entirely separate from the prisoners' library. If the officers were occasionally permitted to sell to the prisoners' library at a cheap rate suitable books for which they had no further use, the arrangement might, we think, be found advantageous to both parties. Approval for any books so purchased should, of course, be sought and given in the same manner as for the others.

DISTRIBUTION OF BOOKS.

Convict Prisons.

120. The methods of distributing books vary within certain limits. On the whole they are satisfactory at the large prisons, but not so good at the smaller ones. In all there is room, we think, for improvement. The best methods are those employed at the large convict prisons such as Portland and Dartmoor. Here several copies of the catalogue of the prison library are provided in each hall, one copy being placed on every landing. When the men come in after labour in the evening it is open to anyone to ask the officer on his landing to let him see the catalogue, and this permission is freely taken advantage of. Having seen the catalogue, the prisoner notes on his slate the names of one or two books he desires. On a fixed day in the week the librarian (an official told off exclusively for this purpose, who has no other duties) goes round the whole prison with his assistant, and copies the whole of these notes. Each prisoner may be thus noted in advance for two books, but not more. The actual exchange of books is effected weekly, one or two halls being taken each day in the week. The librarian and his assistant go round with large wheeled baskets, each of them having a prisoner to act as orderly, and serve out the books to the cells whose occupants have put down their names for them, collecting at the same time those which have been read.

121. Of the books so collected, a portion go straight back to the library, but some are reissued then and there in the halls, either to prisoners who have put down their names for them, or to others who have not asked for any particular books. In either case the librarians note, in large ledgers kept in the library, the number and letters of the prisoner demanding each book, the name of the book demanded by him, the date when he asked for it, and the date when it was issued to him. Complaint was made to us in one instance that the system of re-issuing certain books without returning them to the library led occasionally to what we may call "short-circuiting" in the halls. That is to say, a book might be re-issued by the librarian in the hall where he collected it, in ignorance of the fact that another prisoner in a different hall had been previously noted for it and was waiting for it. The librarian did not admit this, but said it was his practice to consult his notes before re-issue and that thus the wishes of prisoners in other halls could not escape him; and examination of the dates of demand and issue shown in his ledger confirmed his statement. Issue appeared to be seldom more than a fortnight after demand, usually not more than a week; intervals which compare favourably with those endured by the customers of many circulating libraries.

Local Prisons.

122. The method of distribution described above is a fair example of the best system; that of the convict prisons. When we come to the local prisons, especially those of smaller size, the system is much less complete. Catalogues become fewer in number, until, in the third, fourth, and fifth class prisons (*i.e.*, those with a population below 500) it becomes the exception for prisoners to see the catalogue; and usually there is only a single manuscript catalogue which is kept in the library, and is not accessible to prisoners at all. In smaller prisons, too, though all prisoners are permitted to note their wishes on their slates, there is no regular system of collecting these notes. When books are changed, the librarian—who in these prisons is also the schoolmaster—goes round with orderlies carrying baskets of books. The wishes noted on the slates (it should be explained that many prisoners are usually out of their cells at work when books are changed) are met, as far as possible, from the books the schoolmaster has with him or can readily obtain from the library. Prisoners who are in their cells are allowed to choose from the basket. If the prisoner is not in his cell and has left no note on his slate, the schoolmaster gives him such a book as he considers from his knowledge of the man to be suitable. Moreover, in the local prisons generally, we find that there is no attempt to return the books regularly to the library before re-issuing, and that no records are kept to show the location of each book or the dates when they were demanded, issued, or returned.

123. This unsystematic method does not in practice work so badly as might be expected, because of the interest generally taken in the work by the excellent officers who perform it. The schoolmaster usually has a tolerably good idea of the requirements of the individuals in a small prison, and when the choice is left to him he is careful to allot them books suited to their needs. Prisoners often consult him as to

what they shall read, and he is ready with advice. And any prisoner at any prison who has been given a book he does not wish for can ask to have it changed, and his request is always complied with if it is practicable to do so.

124. Most, if not all, Chaplains make it a regular practice to interest themselves in prisoners' reading, and to offer them guidance, which their large experience of prisoners and their books admirably qualifies them to give. Chaplains are especially careful to guide the reading of the juvenile-adult prisoners on thoroughly healthy lines. A lad of any promise is frequently put through a carefully considered course, leading him gradually to the appreciation of literature he could not have endured to read on his reception.

Recommendations as to distribution.

125. The memory and good will of individuals should not, however, be made to bear the whole burden of efficiently serving the local prison libraries; and we think that the introduction of a little more system in all prisons would be fairer to all concerned.

126. We therefore make the following recommendations:—

- (i) At all prisons of the first, second, and third classes, *i.e.*, those with populations above 200, there should be a printed catalogue of the library, and sufficient copies should be provided to enable one copy to be placed on every landing of every hall in the prison. Prisoners should be allowed to see this catalogue in the evening after labour, as the custom is at present in the large convict prisons. We believe that the most convenient and economical plan for providing these catalogues will be to furnish each such prison with a number of extra copies of the printed official catalogue, for use as prison catalogues. They should be marked in manuscript to show which of the books are in the prison library. All books in these catalogues could be arranged, as explained in our earlier recommendations, in a single list, but those which are counted as "books of education" should, in that event, be distinguished by an asterisk.
- (ii) At prisons of the fourth and fifth classes, *i.e.*, all those with a population of under 200, manuscript catalogues will suffice. Each such catalogue should, however, contain the names of the authors, as well as the full titles of the books, and should include a subject index in addition. There should be two or three copies of this manuscript catalogue, and any prisoner who wishes to see it should be permitted to do so.
- (iii) All prisoners should be encouraged, as well as permitted, to note their wishes on their slates, and these notes should at all the larger prisons, and, wherever possible, at the smaller prisons too, be systematically collected beforehand. Prisoners should be allowed to enter on their slates the names of as many books as they desire, but the librarians or schoolmaster warders should not be obliged to note any prisoner on their own lists for more than four books in advance. We think, however, that it would not be imposing undue labour on these officials to require them to note a prisoner, if he desires it, for books in advance up to the number of four.
- (iv) We are not quite satisfied that the present method at any prison altogether excludes the danger of such "short circuits" as were complained of to us in the instance mentioned above; and, therefore, while we are unwilling to propose any rigid rules in matters of detail, we advise that it should be the ordinary practice to return all books weekly to the library for noting, examination, and reissue. The cumbrous ledgers now kept for noting at some prisons could be replaced, with advantage to all concerned, by a small card index, with a card for each book, showing for each issue the prisoner by whom the book was demanded, and the dates of demand, issue, and return. There should be such a card index at every prison. For any number up to 4,000 or 5,000 books it can be kept with great simplicity, ease, and convenience, in a flat box with a lid which when lifted discloses all the cards at once. The working of such an index is more rapid than that of one kept in a cabinet of drawers.

- (v) Prisoners entitled to two library books weekly are usually permitted to keep only one such book in their cell at a time, and this book is changed twice a week. The reason for this arrangement is, we are told, (a) that a certain amount of unauthorised exchanging of books now takes place, and it is feared that this might be increased if prisoners had two library books in their cells at once; and (b) that some prisoners, if given two novels at once, would run through them too rapidly, and have nothing to read on the last two or three days of the week.

We do not attach much importance to these considerations: (a) is a matter to be dealt with by proper supervision, and an unauthorised exchange can always be detected at once by reference to the "library card" kept in every prisoner's cell, on which each book issued to him is noted; (b) can be left to the good sense of the prisoner himself. To change both books at once would save the officials a good deal of labour which appears to us to be unnecessary, and we recommend that this should be the practice.

- (vi) The clerical work of compiling and correcting the prison catalogues at fourth and fifth class prisons, and that of marking and correcting the official catalogues issued for use as prison catalogues at first, second, and third class prisons, as well as that of noting up the library card index weekly, might, we suggest, be performed by prisoners. It is true that there is a sound rule that prisoners are not permitted to be employed on the general clerical work of a prison. But the reasons for that rule do not appear to us to apply to the clerical work connected with the library catalogue and records; while at most, if not all, prisons there are prisoners whose occupation has been clerical and who are unfitted by health or physique for ordinary full labour. Such work would be very suitable for these, and they would probably perform it well; while we believe that the assistance thus given would be a sensible relief to the librarian or the clerk and schoolmaster warder who at present performs these duties.

THE CHAPLAIN'S GUIDANCE.

127. We attach the greatest importance to the Chaplain's systematic guidance of the prisoners in his charge in the matter of their reading. The mass of prisoners cannot know, and no catalogue can inform them, what is the nature of a book's contents. We strongly recommend that all chaplains should do what we believe the majority do now, and make it their regular practice, when visiting prisoners privately in their cells, to inquire into and interest themselves in their reading, and recommend the books which, from their knowledge of the individual, they believe to be most conducive to his improvement as well as to his recreation.

SEPARATION OF LIBRARIES.

128. We found the library at Holloway divided into two separate libraries, kept for Church of England and Roman Catholic prisoners respectively. This separation arose from the fact that years ago certain books containing attacks on the Roman Catholic faith existed in the general library and were issued by inadvertence to Roman Catholic prisoners. It obviously halves the strength of the library, regarded from the individual reader's point of view. We are satisfied that there is no objection to its abolition, which we recommend. The books on either side that are objectionable to the other are very few, and the difficulty is easily met by giving the Chaplain and the Priest respectively the right to veto the issue of any individual book to prisoners of their faith.

129. At Wormwood Scrubs the prison is of unusual construction, consisting of four large parallel halls widely separated from each other. The distance from hall to hall has apparently rendered a single library impracticable, and there exist no less than four separate libraries, one for each hall. A prisoner in one hall is unable to obtain a book from another. Some of the books in these are different, but many of them are quadruplicates, there being a copy to each hall. The strength of this library is therefore almost divided by four from the reader's point of view. We regard this as a defect which ought to be overcome. We understand that the distances between the halls make the maintenance of a single library, involving the weekly transport of many

hundreds of books over distances of a quarter of a mile, very difficult without an increase of the staff. If that course is not adopted, we consider that it should be feasible to shift the entire libraries round from hall to hall at intervals of three or six months, with their catalogues and card indexes. On this plan the library of A hall would at each transfer go to B, that of B to C, that of C to D, and that of D to A. The whole of the books in the prison would thus be available for each hall in the course of a year, and the purchase of books in quadruplicate should cease. If three-monthly transfers are unduly burdensome to the staff, we have no objection to six-monthly transfers, whereby the whole library would pass through each hall in the course of two years—the maximum period of a local prisoner's sentence.

130. If any anomalies similar to the above exist at other prisons of which we have not information, they should be removed by similar expedients; the principle to be observed being the maintenance at each prison of a single library available to the whole of its inmates.

131. At prisons where there is a Juvenile-Adult class being trained under what is known as the "Modified Borstal System" it is the practice to keep the books selected for the Juvenile-Adults apart from the general body of library books. We regard the object aimed at as commendable, but we advise that it should be attained in future by distinguishing books selected as suitable for Juvenile-Adults by a star pasted on the back. By this means they can be merged in the general library while still remaining readily distinguishable, and will be available for other prisoners when not in use by the Juvenile-Adults. The same distinguishing mark as is placed on the back of the book might appear in the catalogue.

132. A star of a different colour would serve equally to distinguish the few books that the Priest considers unsuitable for Roman Catholics, if our suggestion as to withdrawing them altogether from the library be not adopted.

THE QUESTION OF DEPRIVATION OF BOOKS.

133. At the present time a prisoner under punishment is deprived of all save religious books. Several witnesses of experience have urged the allowance of other books, representing that a man under punishment only too often sits idle all day long in his cell merely brooding over the morbid or unhealthy contents of his own mind. We have given anxious consideration to this point. The picture thus drawn for us of the man under punishment is not a pleasant one, and we are at least doubtful whether such a period of enforced mental vacuity, or worse, is likely to improve his character and conduct in any way.

134. At the same time it must be borne in mind that the question of prison punishments is one of the greatest difficulty. They cannot be abolished. Undue indulgence in sentimentality may be very harmful in this connection. However humane the system, however kind, firm, and tactful the staff, it remains true that the evil temper, want of self-control, and general ruffianism of disposition which characterise a small number of the persons admitted to prison, makes it out of question to preserve discipline and order without an effective system of punishment. A system of rewards alone is insufficient.

135. Punishment to be effective must be felt. Otherwise it is merely useless and ridiculous. And if, after an outburst of insubordination and foul language, a prisoner is taken from his working party, relieved of labour, and left to sit in a cell reading an entertaining book, he will very likely welcome the change and take an early opportunity of repeating the offence.

136. We think, however, that while books of an entertaining character should of course be barred, a strictly instructional book, such as an arithmetic or a trade manual, can and should be allowed to a man under punishment; and the Chaplain should encourage him to make use of the time by a resolute endeavour to master its contents. The Chaplain should use his discretion as to the book to be given, remembering always that it must be one that conveys instruction and requires effort.

SENDING BOOKS IN FROM OUTSIDE THE PRISON.

137. Requests are made from time to time by prisoners or their friends for permission to send books or magazines into the prison for the use of a particular prisoner. Such requests are not dealt with at the prison, but are referred to the Commissioners, in order to secure uniformity of practice. The Commissioners usually act on the

principle that permission should only be given for books of a special or technical nature, which are not in the prison library, and ought not to be placed there on account of their cost or the rarity of demand for them; books, too, which the prisoner can show to be of use to him for maintaining and increasing his knowledge of his trade or for some kindred purpose. There has been more indulgence in the past, but the view now taken by the Commissioners is that the prison library ought to be properly stocked, and if that is done it ought to be found sufficient for the supply of all books of general interest. If the sending in of books is freely allowed the well-to-do prisoner gains an unfair advantage over his less fortunate fellows.

138. In the ordinary course any books sent in are required to be left by the prisoner on his departure, and are placed in the prison library. The object of the rule is to counteract to some extent the unfair advantage just mentioned. Occasionally an exception is made in the case of some costly technical book which is unlikely to be of use to any other prisoner, and the owner is allowed to take it away with him on discharge.

139. We think the present practice is sound, and we recommend no change.

OBLITERATION OF BLANK PAGES.

140. Standing Orders at present require the obliteration or defacement—usually done with a pen or an indiarubber stamp—of all blank pages and portions of blank pages in all books before they are issued to prisoners. The object is to prevent their use for clandestine communications. The process is troublesome to the staff, and produces an unsightly disfigurement of the books. Moreover, it usually leaves the page still in a condition in which it could be used for writing on by any person extremely anxious to do so. We think this requirement might safely be dispensed with. All books are, or should be, examined on collection, and before reissue, to see that they have not been torn or defaced by the prisoners; and if this examination is carefully made it ought, we think, to be sufficient to serve the purpose.

141. The following is a summary of our recommendations:—

LIBRARY BOOKS.

Books of Fiction.

(i) The desire for books of fiction in prisons should be met, as now, in a liberal spirit, but should be subject to a certain censorship. Novels of an unhealthy or morbid tone in particular should be excluded. Among novels other than those of the greatest writers, preference should be given to stories of a healthy, bracing, outdoor kind.

Other Library Books.

(ii) There should be a good supply of histories, biographies, books of travel, and philosophical works at convict prisons, and at the local prisons in the largest centres. But at the majority of local prisons such books can be much fewer in proportion to the population, because of the rarity of educated prisoners. There should, however, be a few standard histories even at small prisons. Where an educated prisoner happens to be confined in a small prison, the library of which is inadequate to his needs, books can be borrowed for him from a larger prison.

Bound Magazines.

(iii) The number of bound volumes of magazines should be diminished, and the provision in Standing Orders fixing the proportion of magazine volumes at one-third of the whole number of library books should be dispensed with.

(iv) The questions of number, and of the frequency of issue to individual prisoners, should be left to the discretion of the Chaplain at each prison. Magazines should be supplied somewhat more liberally to convicts than to local prisoners, and to women than to men. For a normally intelligent prisoner a maximum of one magazine volume in four weeks should be amply sufficient.

(v) Preference should be given to those magazines which publish useful articles.

(vi) Magazines requiring frequent excision and obliteration of unsuitable matter should be discontinued altogether.

Political Reviews.

(vii) A certain number of periodicals of a superior class dealing with current politics and other matters of interest to educated readers, such as the "XIXth Century," should be supplied to the libraries of convict prisons and the largest local prisons. These should be circulated in bound volumes containing three months' issues apiece. Current numbers should not be issued to prisoners.

Newspapers.

(viii) Newspapers should not be given, save in exceptional cases such as the present limited supply to the special grade inmates at Borstal.

*"BOOKS OF SECULAR INSTRUCTION."**Name.*

(ix) The name should be altered to "books of education."

Definition.

(x) Chaplains should be given a wide discretion to allow books of practically all kinds except books of fiction under this head. In special cases a Chaplain should be at liberty to allow an imaginative book of standard rank even in the first stage, if satisfied that it is desirable to do so. But novels should in all ordinary cases be allowed only to those prisoners who have passed through the first stage.

Question of drawing attention to these Books.

(xi) Both convict and local prison cell cards should contain entries drawing attention in plain language to the existence of a supply of books of education.

(xii) Chaplains should have discretion as to recommending prisoners to apply for such books, but should not usually do so in cases where the sentence is 14 days or less.

Technical Manuals.

(xiii) The number and variety of such books should be somewhat increased, especially at the larger prisons. There should be at every prison a series of the small trade manuals, and additional copies of those dealing with the trades carried on at the prison. At the larger prisons there should be in addition a few technical treatises of a more advanced kind on the trades carried on at the prison.

(xiv) Manuals of shorthand and book-keeping should be generally available.

Technical Magazines.

(xv) In certain cases technical magazines or trade periodicals should be taken and issued, bound in three-monthly volumes, to those engaged in the industry with which they deal.

Number allowed to each Prisoner.

(xvi) The number of books of education usually allowed to individual prisoners might be somewhat increased in the case of convicts who have passed a certain portion of their sentences with good conduct and industry, provided they are able and willing to profit by them.

(xvii) The total number of library books and books of education allowed in any one cell at one time should not exceed four.

BOOKS OF MORAL INSTRUCTION.

(xviii) Some special books should be kept by Chaplains for issue as alternatives to the "Narrow Way" in suitable cases.

(xix) This collection of special books might include, besides books whose basis is religious, a few books of a purely ethical or philosophic character.

(xx) At the largest prisons a few separate books of moral instruction specially suitable for Wesleyans and other Nonconformists should be kept.

(xxi) The "Healthy Home" should only be given in the last month of a sentence.

BOOKS OF DEVOTION.

(xxii) The point should be considered whether an Old Testament History might not with advantage be substituted for the Old Testament in the case of Juvenile-Adults.

OFFICIAL CATALOGUE.

(xxiii) There should be an official catalogue of books permitted for prison libraries. Every prison should possess a copy. The catalogue of a good free library should be taken as the basis for the first catalogue, and Chaplains should be asked to suggest additions and eliminations. To the list thus formed should be added books selected by the Chaplain Inspector, the Commissioners, and any other competent persons whom they may ask to advise them.

(xxiv) Chaplains should be at liberty to demand books not in the catalogue. Such books, if approved, to be supplied at once, and noted for inclusion in the catalogue at the next revision.

(xxv) The catalogue should be revised, reprinted, and reissued to all prisons once in three years.

(xxvi) The form of the catalogue should be that of a single alphabetical list, on the system commonly adopted in free libraries, which serves at the same time as an index of authors and a subject index. Books which are to be regarded as "books of education" in the technical prison sense to be distinguished by an asterisk.

PROGRESSIVE STAGE SYSTEM.

(xxvii) The distinction between books issued to local prisoners in the first stage and those given subsequently should be maintained, subject to the qualifications already mentioned.

HOSPITAL PATIENTS.

(xxviii) Hospital patients should be exempted from the restrictions which apply to other prisoners, and Chaplains should have full discretion to supply them with suitable books.

ILLITERATE PRISONERS.

(xxix) All steps that are reasonably practicable should be taken to supply illiterate prisoners with suitable pictorial matter.

SUFFICIENCY OF LIBRARIES.

(xxx) The capitation grant of 1s. 3d. per head on the daily average population of each prison should be increased to 1s. 6d. at the convict prisons and the Borstal institutions, but at the local prisons should remain unaltered. The sums made available to be regarded as maxima, not necessarily to be fully spent.

(xxxi) At local prisons the Standing Order which at present limits the number of volumes according to the size of the prison population other than those in the first stage should be dispensed with.

(xxxii) The fullest advantage should be taken of the cheap editions of standard books now published.

(xxxiii) The present arrangements for rebinding books should be further systematised and improved in certain particulars.

(xxxiv) All books which "form part of the cell furniture" should be supplied separately and should not form a charge on the capitation grant.

(xxxv) The annual condemnations of worn-out books should be made in advance, and the books should not actually pass out of use until the new supply has been received.

(xxxvi) The present method of purchase through the Stationery Office should be maintained; but to avoid delay in supplying books fixed dates should be appointed for the transmission of the annual demands to the Stationery Office and for the deliveries by their contractors.

(xxxvii) Occasional purchases might be made from the prison officers' libraries.

DISTRIBUTION.

(xxxviii) At first, second, and third class prisons there should be printed catalogues of the library, sufficient in number to allow one for each landing of each hall. Marked copies of the official catalogue could be utilised for this purpose.

(xxxix) At fourth and fifth class prisons manuscript catalogues will suffice.

(xl) Prisoners should be noted by the librarians for as many as four books in advance, if they so desire, but not more.

(xli) It should be the ordinary practice to return all books to the library weekly for record, examination, and reissue. A card index should be used at each prison for purposes of record.

(xlii) Prisoners entitled to two books a week should have them changed simultaneously, so that distribution twice weekly in any one part of a prison may not be required.

(xlili) Clerical labour on catalogues and indexes should be performed by prisoners.

CHAPLAIN'S GUIDANCE.

(xliv) All Chaplains and Priests should make a point of giving prisoners systematic guidance in the matter of reading.

OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS.

(xlv) At each prison there should be a single library available to the whole of its inmates. The Chaplain and the Roman Catholic Priest should each have the right to veto the issue of any particular book to persons of their own faith.

Books specially suitable, or specially unsuitable, for particular classes of prisoners need not be separated from the general body of the library, but should be distinguished by stars of different colours pasted on the backs.

(xlvi) A man under punishment should be allowed a book of a strictly instructional kind, and should be encouraged to use the time in attempting to master it.

(xlvii) Permission to a prisoner to have books sent in to him by friends outside should only be granted in the case of books of a special or technical nature; and any books so sent in should in the ordinary course be retained in the prison library when the prisoner is discharged.

(xlviii) The obliteration of blank pages should cease.

142. In conclusion, we have much pleasure in expressing our thanks to our Secretary, Mr. Wall, whose courtesy, industry, and knowledge of departmental practice have been of great assistance to us.

M. L. WALLER.
OLIVE BIRRELL.
WALTER RALEIGH.
C. B. SIMPSON.
A. L. STANLEY.
BASIL H. THOMSON.

A. J. WALL,
Secretary,
27th October 1910.

APPENDIX I.

Memorandum by the Rev. C. B. Simpson, Chaplain Inspector of Prisons.

PRISON LIBRARIES.

Brief History of the Subject.

In the Prison Act, 1865 (Schedule I., 48), it was enacted that "no books or printed papers shall be admitted into any prison for the use of prisoners except by the permission of the Visiting Justices." As Visiting Justices at that time were frequently hostile to the introduction of any save religious books, the "Libraries" of those days were of a meagre and restricted description, in some prisons consisting of a few tracts and dog-eared religious books.

In 1878 the prisons were taken over from the Counties by Government, and the Local Prison Code, Rule 42 (of the rules made by the Secretary of State in February 1878) declares that "a library shall be provided in every prison, consisting of such books as from time to time may be sanctioned by the Commissioners." This decision was founded on the practice in force in convict prisons for many years, and is laid down in the existing Rules for the Government of Local and Convict Prisons made by the Secretary of State in April 1899, under the Prison Act of 1898.

The Existing System.

Strength at which libraries are maintained (a) in convict prisons.—No rule is laid down, but the yearly addition is calculated on a basis of three books per head of the daily average population. The books annually condemned as worn out, &c., amount to about 20 per cent. The convict libraries are well stocked, and when cause is shown a supplementary grant is never refused. (b) Local Prisons.—Here the strength is exactly determined by Standing Order 475. The number of volumes supplied to each prison is calculated according to the number of prisoners other than those in the first stage. Thus in a prison of 80 such, and under, the strength would be 275. In a prison of 1,100 to 1,200, 1,760.

Distribution.

(a) The Convict Prisons.—Two books a week are allowed, or one periodical, *i.e.*, bound volume of magazine numbers. The custom (there is no rule) limiting the number to two is not strict, and in hospital little or no restriction would be enforced. The distribution is made by the schoolmaster or librarian warders under the supervision of the Chaplain and Roman Catholic Priest.

(b) In local prisons the progressive stage system provides that every prisoner in Stage II. shall have one library book a week, and Stages III. and IV. two a week (or one periodical). Those in Stage I. of the third division receive no library books—only books of secular instruction, a phrase explained hereinafter.

The second division prisoners are allowed two a week from the beginning of the sentence and in the case of the young generally (Standing Order 472), and of Juvenile-Adults in particular, the Chaplain has a large discretion. Youths in the first stage may, indeed, at the discretion of the Chaplain, receive library books on admission. The library books are distributed by the schoolmaster or schoolmaster warder under the supervision of the Chaplain. In small prisons this system works well enough, and it is not a difficult matter, with the exercise of some patience, to deal out to each prisoner entitled to the privilege a book fairly suitable to his capacities. But in the larger prisons, where the contents of the many hundred volumes are only vaguely known to Chaplains and schoolmasters, there is much difficulty. The educated prisoner knows what he wants and understands the use of a catalogue, and is consequently better served, whilst those who can read well enough but have no knowledge of books often suffer from a distribution unavoidably haphazard.

The Juvenile-Adults, however, are, in the main, well catered for, and special care is taken over the selection of their books, which are put aside on separate shelves and reserved for their sole use.

Selection.

The following is the present method of selection:—At the end of every year the Chaplain at each prison, assisted by the schoolmaster, prepares a list of books sufficient (1) to replace those worn out and condemned, and (2) to bring the library up to its allotted strength, so far

as the sum at his disposal enables him to do so. The list is then submitted to the chairman of the visiting committee, whose signature follows as a matter of course without much, if any, scrutiny. So endorsed, the annual claim or "demand" is forwarded to the Commissioners for their approval. Before examining and initialling the claim the Commissioners look to the Chaplain-Inspector to exercise what vigilance is possible in excluding worthless and harmful matter. It is obvious, however, that it is not within one man's power to make himself acquainted with the contents of several hundred volumes every year. At the best, his knowledge is very incomplete, and thus, in spite of precaution, it is probable that in most prison libraries a certain number of not wholly desirable books might be found, but, under Standing Orders, Chaplains are directed to excise or obliterate any objectionable matter.

These drawbacks, inseparable from the present system, would to a great extent be remedied by the issue of a specially prepared and carefully classified catalogue of books suitable for prison libraries and adapted to the widely differing capacities and attainments of the prisoners. Such a catalogue was for many years in existence, but, becoming obsolete, was discontinued. The choice is now practically left to individual Chaplains and is made from catalogues supplied by the various publishing firms.

Purchase.

Each prison is allowed to spend up to the limit of the 1s. 3d. capitation grant on the daily average of the year before, if necessary to bring its library up to the approved strength and "no more" (Standing Order 476). An average price per volume of 2s. 6d. must not be exceeded. The books are purchased and supplied through the Stationery Office. It should be stated that, out of the grant, the cost of moral instruction books and educational books other than the approved school books has to be met. Books of moral instruction do not include the Bibles, Prayer and Hymn Books which form a part of the cell furniture of every literate prisoner.

It may here be pointed out that the Commissioners have power to increase the strength of any particular library beyond the grant of 1s. 3d. per head, so long as the total amount for all the prisons together is not exceeded.

The approved School Books are :—

English History Reading Books (National Society).
Language Lessons.
Arithmetic.
Collins' Clear Type Pronouncing Dictionary.

The Books of Moral Instruction in use are :—

For Anglicans : "The Narrow Way" (for which "The Traveller's Guide" may be substituted).
For Roman Catholics : "Think well on't," &c.
For Nonconformists : "Pilgrim's Progress," and Methodist Hymn Books.
For all prisoners alike : "A Healthy Home and how to keep it." For this, in the case of Juvenile-Adults, the book called "A Pack of Lies" may be substituted at the Chaplain's discretion.

Books of Secular Instruction.

Allowed in first stage when library books are not.

Frequent mention of these is made in Rules and Standing Orders, and the System of Progressive Stages allows them to prisoners in all four stages. The phrase "Books of Secular Instruction" is variously interpreted by different Chaplains. Some restrict it so narrowly as to apply the term to school books alone. Others limit it, somewhat less strictly, to distinctly educational books; others adopting a broader interpretation, include histories and biographies, and indeed almost everything except fiction.

But no sufficient provision has ever been made for the supply of books of (distinctively) Secular Instruction to all short-sentence prisoners. So that in practice few are issued, except at the special request of the prisoner, to those in the first stage. On such request an uneducated prisoner would be supplied with one of the school book readers; an educated prisoner with one of the higher educational or non-fictional books available from the library. The practice in the different prisons is not uniform; the stock is not always adequate to the demand, and more expenditure will be needed if the Standing Orders are to be carried out strictly.

It has always been the wish of the Commissioners to meet the requirements of prisoners where a desire was shown to acquire special knowledge in connection with their trades or professions, and books on shorthand, navigation, &c., and various trade manuals have been specially supplied.

Books sent in by Friends outside.

This privilege has been approved, not generally, but in special cases, for some years now, and has given rise to a good deal of correspondence. Every request is submitted to the Commissioners and is decided on its merits. The education of the prisoner is considered and the nature of the books offered. Costly books of the more solid kind are often accepted. Novels are refused. A condition is made that books so introduced by the friends of a prisoner shall be added to the library and placed in general circulation.

In exceptional cases a prisoner is permitted to retain such books on discharge. Some governors and Chaplains deprecate the introduction of books from the outside on the ground that it gives prisoners with well-to-do friends an advantage over the rest. But since the whole prison is ultimately benefited this objection does not amount to much.

The Question of the Introduction of Newspapers and Periodicals and the Circulation of Bound Volumes of Magazines.

(a) Newspapers and weekly periodicals are only permitted to trial prisoners and to prisoners in the first division.

(b) Periodicals in separate numbers are no longer circulated. Bound volumes of magazines are not only permitted, but by Standing Order 495 are required to form one-third of the total number of volumes in each library.

There can be no doubt whatever of the immense popularity of these magazines, especially of the lighter sort. The demand for them is urgent, and the inability of the schoolmasters to satisfy it causes much heartburning. How far this kind of reading tends to the mental and moral elevation of the prisoners is another matter. If it is true, as Sir Robert Morant says (in a letter quoted in a "Times" leader of the 22nd April), that "at no time in the history of this country has steady and resolute reading in the right direction been more needed to deepen and strengthen the national character," then it may be thought that a diet of snippets, sensational short stories and highly spiced articles, is not the best in the world for men and women of feeble, unbalanced, or vicious character. The choice of books for prison libraries should no doubt range over a wide field. But the question whether mere distraction and amusement is the chief object to be aimed at, or whether the welfare of the prisoners is not best achieved by the exclusion from the libraries of all enervating and frivolous literature, is of very great importance.

APPENDIX II.

STRENGTH OF PRISON LIBRARIES.

PRISON.	Daily Average Population in 1909-10.	Number of Library Books (excluding Books of Secular and Moral Instruction, Devotional Books, and School Books).	Number of Library Books of which there is more than one Copy in the Library.	Number of Library Books which are Popular or Illustrated Magazines.	Number of Books of Secular Instruction.
Aylesbury - - - - -	120	575	1	45	64
„ S.I.R. - - - - -	62	165	—	18	—
„ B.I. - - - - -	8	145	—	3	16
Bedford - - - - -	87	330	1	8	210
Birmingham - - - - -	526	680	35	76	600
Bodmin - - - - -	60	275	—	3	20
Borstal - - - - -	243	580	93	48	1,208
Brecon - - - - -	38	230	—	54	24
Bristol - - - - -	191	444	1	128	65
Brixton - - - - -	625	1,210	91	262	80
Cambridge - - - - -	95	268	—	66	6
Canterbury - - - - -	151	263	—	105	96
Cardiff - - - - -	312	440	2	75	55
Carlisle - - - - -	104	205	—	62	120
Carmarthen - - - - -	56	190	—	9	90
Carnarvon - - - - -	32	275	—	100	50
Chelmsford - - - - -	282	580	47	150	250
Dartmoor - - - - -	1,169	2,666	“ Majority of popular books are duplicated.”	1,172 with 36 different titles.	850
Derby - - - - -	308	271	—	105	130
Devizes - - - - -	70	275	—	25	110
Dorchester - - - - -	96	372	—	76	40
Durham - - - - -	672	630 (+ those on order).	40	120	130
Exeter - - - - -	227	740	40	240	350
Gloucester - - - - -	164	427	—	60	45
Hereford - - - - -	40	226	2	76	107
Holloway (C.E.) - - - - -	589	660	48	203	112
„ (R.C.) - - - - -	90	250	16	40	—
Hull - - - - -	401	440	—	82	324
Ipswich - - - - -	90	275	—	72	152
Knutsford - - - - -	558	851	79	293	1,137
Lancaster - - - - -	142	320	—	93	33
Leeds - - - - -	543	740	4	154	120
Leicester - - - - -	220	440	2	147	143
Lewes - - - - -	266	512	10	50	175
Lincoln - - - - -	293	137	1	27	577
„ B.I. - - - - -	42	242	1	70	671
Liverpool - - - - -	1,241	850	3	—	349
Maidstone (Local) - - - - -	248	440	25	100	42
„ (Convict) - - - - -	175	682	24	87	307
Manchester - - - - -	1,093	940	—	About one-third.	50
Newcastle - - - - -	321	284	3	89	26
Northallerton - - - - -	187	322	3	45	528
Northampton - - - - -	150	365	1	61	—
Norwich - - - - -	119	256 (and annual demand).	—	64	17
Nottingham - - - - -	203	354	4	107	40
Oxford - - - - -	88	264	—	50	80
Parkhurst - - - - -	777	2,286	425	406	5,460
Pentonville - - - - -	1,083	1,280	190	155	500
Plymouth - - - - -	58	275	—	33	70
Portland - - - - -	717	1,437	228	280	390
Portsmouth - - - - -	129	275	1	90	150
Preston - - - - -	437	500	—	150 (5 for illiterates).	140
Reading - - - - -	168	400	—	237	200
Ruthin - - - - -	53	228 (52 scrap albums).	1	53	17 (chiefly technical).
St. Albans - - - - -	101	275	1	{ “ Windsor ” “ Strand ” “ Harpers ”	} “ Healthy Homes ” only.

PRISON.	Daily Average Population in 1909-10.	Number of Library Books (excluding Books of Secular and Moral Instruction, Devotional Books, and School Books).	Number of Library Books of which there is more than one Copy in the Library.	Number of Library Books which are Popular or Illustrated Magazines.	Number of Books of Secular Instruction.
Shepton Mallet - - - -	107	231	—	60	30
Shrewsbury - - - -	131	250	—	90	25
Stafford - - - -	633	1,051	120	268	200
Swansea - - - -	217	117	—	11	365
Usk - - - -	132	263	2	80	12
Wakefield - - - -	959	1,047	207	186	222
Wandsworth - - - -	1,295	1,325	49	373	600
Warwick - - - -	279	545	—	94	52
Winchester - - - -	328	440	17	140	109
			(magazines).		
Worcester - - - -	241	355	12	114	70
Wormwood Scrubs - - - -	1,376	987	549	193	3,346

APPENDIX III.

FAVOURITE PRISON AUTHORS.

Each prison was asked to name the six favourite authors among its own prisoners. In the following table the figure opposite each author's name shows the number of prisons at which he or she is one of the six favourites.

Mrs. Henry Wood - - - -	58	R. M. Ballantyne - - - -	2
Charles Dickens - - - -	46	Marie Corelli - - - -	2
G. A. Henty - - - -	20	Nat. Gould - - - -	2
Rider Haggard - - - -	20	Grant Allen - - - -	2
Sir Walter Scott - - - -	19	Jules Verne - - - -	2
Wilkie Collins - - - -	17	Thomas Hardy - - - -	2
Captain Marryat - - - -	13	Stanley Weyman - - - -	2
Alexandre Dumas - - - -	12	Max Pemberton - - - -	2
Silas Hocking - - - -	11	W. H. G. Kingston - - - -	2
Miss Braddon - - - -	9	Allen Raine - - - -	2
Charles Reade - - - -	9	Curtis Yorke - - - -	2
Lord Lytton - - - -	8	Augusta Evans Wilson - - - -	2
Clark Russell - - - -	8	Evelyn Everett Green - - - -	1
Charles Kingsley - - - -	7	Mark Twain - - - -	1
Rolf Boldrewood - - - -	7	Anthony Hope - - - -	1
Walter Besant - - - -	6	A. E. W. Mason - - - -	1
Rosa N. Carey - - - -	6	Jack London - - - -	1
Edna Lyall - - - -	6	Mrs. Craik - - - -	1
Hall Caine - - - -	6	William Westall - - - -	1
Conan Doyle - - - -	6	Charlotte Yonge - - - -	1
G. Manville Fenn - - - -	5	Clara Mulholland - - - -	1
Marion Crawford - - - -	5	Fergus Hume - - - -	1
Charles Lever - - - -	5	Jane Austen - - - -	1
Harrison Ainsworth - - - -	5	Emma J. Worboise - - - -	1
Fenimore Cooper - - - -	4	Whyte Melville - - - -	1
W. M. Thackeray - - - -	4	G. R. Sims - - - -	1
James Grant - - - -	4	B. M. Croker - - - -	1
Joseph Hocking - - - -	4	B. L. Farjeon - - - -	1
Mayne Reid - - - -	3	Guy Boothby - - - -	1
E. Phillips Oppenheim - - - -	3	Annie S. Swan - - - -	1
William Le Queux - - - -	3	L. T. Meade - - - -	1
Baroness Orczy - - - -	2		









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